



# Jackson Hole News & Guide

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## Elk are duping valley hunters

Study confirms how wily Grand Teton elk survive.

By Cory Hatch

A new study confirms what wildlife managers have suspected all along: Wily elk from Grand Teton National Park migrate to the south end of the National Elk Refuge earlier than most, and are much more successful at avoiding hunters.

Penned by Bruce Smith, retired refuge biologist, the investigation shows that the elk leave for the refuge when park forage dwindles, not when snow pushes them south. Smith's paper appears in a recent edition of *Northwest Science*.

The study comes after National Elk Refuge officials started a limited-range weapon hunt on the south end of the refuge this fall. The goal of the hunt is, in part, to target elk from the Grand Teton herd segment that see very little hunting pressure. The hunt is also designed to move animals off the south end of the refuge in fall, preserving winter forage and reducing the need for supplemental feed.

The south-end hunt has, thus far, yielded mixed results. Though hunters have harvested fewer than 10 elk on the south end of the refuge, there is evidence that the presence of hunters is pushing elk farther north. Refuge biologist Eric Cole reported between 900 and 1,700 elk on the south end in late October and early November.

"Without this [south-hunt] disturbance, there would likely be more  
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### ► BRONC BOMBER



NEWS&GUIDE PHOTO / BRADLY J. BONER

Jackson quarterback Blane Woodfin prepares to fire a pass during the Broncs' win over Douglas on Saturday. The 10-0 Broncs play their first state championship game in 18 years Saturday against the Buffalo Bison in Jackson.

## Taking care of business

Wyoming, Chinese officials agree exchange could be beneficial to both regions.

By Johanna Love

As we traveled through Shanxi Province in China, members of a Jackson Hole goodwill delegation were agog over the juxtaposition of old and new.

Donkey carts and Mercedes Benzes cruised the same streets with cargo

bicycles; we were served warm Sprite with ancient eggs; a Buddhist monk chatted on his cell phone in a monastery that was built long before white people entered Wyoming.

"It's a land of contrast," said Dan Butcher, a member of the board of the Wyoming Global Leadership Exchange. "The new technology, ancient ways. The old, the new, the rich, the poor. It's phenomenal."

The trip, organized by the Jackson Hole Center for Global Affairs, was a 10-day goodwill mission to the north-central Shanxi Province to consider  
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NEWS&GUIDE PHOTO / JOHANNA LOVE

Carved wooden figures depicting the afterlife line the walls of a temple on Mount Wutai Shan in China.

## 850 affordable homes still not enough to meet need

Private sector will add much of the new supply.

By Cara Froedge

When the comprehensive plan was finalized 13 years ago, a Flat Creek condo was listed for \$165,000, three acres on Fish Creek advertised at \$455,000 and rent for a two-bedroom townhome was \$660 per month — including utilities.

Even with those prices, affordable housing was called "one of the most important issues in Teton County" because a disconnect between wages

and home prices forced people from Jackson Hole.

In 1994 elected officials adopted zoning for affordable housing and regulations aimed at keeping middle-class folks here, and the first affordable homes were sold and occupied.

Since then, about 850 ownership and rental affordable units have been built or acquired to date, representing about 8 percent of the valley's total housing stock. Leaders expect about 100 addi-

tional units per year in the future.

"For most communities, that would be a good percentage," said Jeff Daugherty, county planning director. "In Teton County, we know that is a low number."

It's estimated that 430 to 640 new units are needed just to catch up with the shortage of workforce housing, and experts say developers should devote 40 percent of new building to deed-restricted housing just to keep up with the

problem.

While affordable housing advocates may be fighting for more units on one front, they're now also fighting critics on another.

In recent years, valley residents have attacked affordable housing, mostly the public Teton County Housing Authority, saying it doesn't have to play by the same rules that constrain other types of development.

Affordable housing, they say, is allowed greater density and permitted in places that otherwise may be deemed inappropriate. The people  
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A DEVELOPMENT PICTURE - III



NEWS&amp;GUIDE PHOTOS / JOHANNA LOVE

Our hosts in Shanxi Province, China, went over the top in making us feel welcome with banquet dinners, gifts and even this banner at Datong Hotel.

## CHINA

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how a tourism exchange could be mutually beneficial. This was the sixth in a series of visits among Shanxi and Jackson Hole residents that began in November 2004.

Our hosts kept us at a run the whole time, zipping from sightseeing to business meetings and relationship-building banquets.

At one of our first stops on the tour, the women's Pushou Si monastery, Han Buddhist nun Ruth Pin-Chi Shi told us that one of the eventual aims of their study is "going out to touch the world." She taught us an incantation that she and her sisters do daily, "o-mi-to-fo."

That monastery was the jumping-off place for our experience in the Buddhist pilgrimage destination of Mount Wutai Shan, where Jackson Hole residents attempted to wrap our senses around how Jackson Hole and Wutai are similar enough to warrant a joint tourism exchange program, which would help Americans touch China and vice versa.

At the first business meeting in Taihuai, the town nestled among Wutai Shan's five peaks, Wyoming and Shanxi officials hammered out the beginnings of an agreement and several men prowled the table with still and video cameras. All the flash bulbs seemed to indicate the gravity of the occasion.

"In Jackson Hole, Wyoming," Mayor Mark Barron began, "we feel the power of place. And I think all of us felt the power of this spiritual place."

Wutai Shan receives more than 3 million tourists per year, according to Shanxi officials, yet only about 10,000 of those come from foreign countries, and a fraction of those from America. The

province of Shanxi receives about 7 million tourists, similar to the number that travel annually to Wyoming.

Wutai is comparable to Yellowstone National Park in prestige, said Shi Xian Min, the deputy director of the Foreign Affairs Tourism Bureau of Xinzhou Administration of Shanxi. It is a place where the sects of Chinese Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism coexist, and it is "the center of international Buddhist culture," a place where "harmony between nature and culture" is maintained.

He proposed a sister city relationship.

Barron and co-leader Gene Bryan, head of the Wyoming tourism board of directors, said they needed more information before that concept could be addressed.

The gap in sophistication between international tourism industries in America and China became apparent when our delegation asked the Chinese people how easy it would be for ordinary Jackson tourists to travel to Shanxi. Both the Jackson Hole Center for Global Affairs and the Shanxi Provincial Tourism Administration worked for months to make our visit smooth, but could other Wyoming tourists expect the same?

When Barron asked the question, "What do you have to help facilitate American travelers," a frenzy of conversation between translators and officials ensued.

Gene Bryan rephrased the question: "Who would they work with?"

And several more times: "If I'm sitting in my kitchen and I say, 'I'm going to Wutai Mountain,' who do I call?" "People in the USA, how do they find that information?" "Do you utilize the Web?" "Is there somebody to call?"

After all of that confusion,



At Pushou Si monastery, Buddhist nun Ruth Pin-Chi Shi shows Wyoming delegation members how to kowtow to Buddha. Behind her, from left, are Ruth Ann Petroff, Mark Barron, Mike Gireau, Kari Cooper, Derek Goodson and Meegan Moszynski.

they answered, yes, they have a Web site and travel services. Visit [www.sxta.com.cn/](http://www.sxta.com.cn/) and click on "English version."

Shanxi officials assured us that two airports are under construction, one fewer than 60 miles away, which would shorten the trip from an airport to Wutai Mountain. Today, the closest major airport is Taiyuan, 150 miles away.

Our delegation showed a map of Wyoming. We talked of Jackson Hole being the busiest airport in the state and hosting 3.5 million tourists per year. Whereupon one of the Chinese people asked, "How far is it from Las Vegas?"

Our leaders had many suggestions for the Chinese people: Bundle transportation, lodging, meals and scenic attraction admission fees. Build those airports. Invite travel writers and photographers.

Both parties agreed that



Shanxi Provincial Tourism Administration officials Zhengyu Guo, Tian Xizhao and Ruijiang Zhao listen to a translator explain Jackson Mayor Mark Barron's comments.

increasing the number of tourist visas, both for Chinese and Americans, is a priority, and both pledged to work with federal officials to make that happen.

"If we're going to have a successful relationship,"

Barron said, "there has to be a concerted effort for joint marketing. We must develop a marketing relationship that is symbiotic and fruitful."

Although speaking for the Wyoming delegation, Barron

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NEWS&GUIDE PHOTOS / JOHANNA LOVE

**Jackson Town Administrator Bob McLaurin waves farewell to a group of Chinese hosts at Datong Hotel. The ladies in red dresses served breakfast, lunch and supper to the Wyoming delegation, causing us to wonder if they ever slept.**



NEWS&GUIDE PHOTO ILLUSTRATION / STEVE REMICH

**Shanxi Province, in north-central China, is home to Buddhist temples dating to A.D. 68. It is a tourist destination for Chinese people and pilgrims.**

## TOURISM

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said Jackson Hole was “not quite ready yet” to commit to a sister city relationship, the Wyoming leaders agreed that a tourism exchange should be pursued.

“We have to advertise, access, deliver,” Barron said. “That’s the order of business for us.”

Through a translator, Dr. Zhengyu Guo, head of the Shanxi Provincial Tourism Administration, agreed to all the terms.

“Both of us to strive and push forward,” Guo said.

After many repetitions of shi shi (thank you) ended the three-hour meeting, the Wyoming delegation’s leaders sagged into bus seats, mentally exhausted by the translation and communication difficulties that took up at least half the time.

“It’s fumbling our way forward,” said David Wendt, president of the global affairs center.

But proof of the delegation’s success and investment in the Wyoming-Shanxi relationship is already taking form.

Kari Cooper, a member of the Wyoming tourism board of directors, took notes from the meeting and drafted a memorandum of understanding to promote tourism between Wutai Mountain and Shanxi and Jackson Hole and Wyoming. It is being revised by all the involved officials, and, if it is approved by the state tourism board and Jackson Town Council, could facilitate efforts between Shanxi and Wyoming on three fronts: marketing, visas and professional exchange opportunities.

At a second business meeting, this time in Taiyuan, we met Wang Chun-Ling, president of the Taiyuan Vocational Institute of Tourism, where the top language of study is English, and she trains



**Students at Mount Wutai Middle School flip through skiing magazines brought to them by Jackson Hole teens Nathan and Zeke Trautenberg. The Jackson youths asked their Chinese peers to write or e-mail and begin a pen-pal exchange.**

hundreds of students in hospitality. Jackson business owners were excited at the prospect of having those students work in Jackson for a year, enabling them to better communicate with Chinese tourists.

And a younger generation of Wyomingites wants to get a jump on international relations.

Jackson Hole Community School delegates Nathan and Zeke Trautenberg, 15 and 17, delivered a bit of American culture to Wutai Shan Middle School in the form of *Powder* and *Free Skier* magazines. Nathan demonstrated his beatboxing talents and several of the Chinese girls stood and sang a song. The Jackson Hole Center for Global Affairs hopes to begin an e-mail or Web exchange between Teton County schools and ones in Wutai.

“We planted a seed,” Olivia Meigs said. “It’s up to them to help it grow.”

Meigs also hopes that another thing to come out of friendships between China and the United States is a concerted effort on China’s part to reduce its air pollution.

“This is not just China,” Meigs said during one of the delegation’s many bus rides, gazing out the bus window at the dark sky near Taiyuan, a city of about 3.4 million. “This is our planet. This is our air. We all want the same thing, ultimately. They’re trying to get to a higher level of living. And we’re all going to pay the price.”

Town Administrator Bob McLaurin said the Chinese people were so warm that they became the highlight of the trip.

“The place was phenomenal, but the people were really what made it,” McLaurin said.

For Butcher, seeing “all those things I’ve read about” made the trip worthwhile: “masses of people, population in action, the haze, that payment for progress they’re making here.”

He said that Wyoming and Shanxi have more in common than not.

“Jackson also is a good example of the tension between preservation and progress,” Butcher said. “We can understand how similar we all are.”